

ADMINISTRATIVE COMMITTEE

Bill Reid, Chair

Richard Ekwall

Lee Fiebiger

Arden Fritz

Roy June

Brad Kuiper

Jenny Overton

Judy Rodgers

ADMINISTRATIVE COMMITTEE

The Administrative Committee of the 2003-2004 Grand Jury reviewed the following departments of County government:

Board of Supervisors
Clerk of the Board
County Administrative Office
County Counsel
Human Resources Department
Information Services Department

Subcommittees were established to review these departments. The Board of Supervisors, department directors, and principal office personnel were interviewed during the investigations. It resulted in final reports and recommendations for the Board of Supervisors and the Information Services Department.

One representative of the committee regularly attended the Board of Supervisors' weekly Tuesday meetings. At times he was joined by other Grand Jurors. Board decisions on agenda items were reported to the full Grand Jury each week.

The Administrative Committee reviewed four citizen complaints received during the year. None were acted upon.

During the 2003-2004 tenure of the Administrative Committee, two Supervisors left office and were replaced on the Board with interim Supervisors whose terms of office expire when two Supervisors will be elected in the November 2004 election.

In April 2004, the County Administrative Officer resigned. The County has appointed five (5) County Administrative Officers in the last three years.

The County Counsel retired in 2003. The Director of the Department of Human Resources retired in May 2004.

The findings and recommendations in final reports for the Board of Supervisors and the Information Services Department follow.

BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

BACKGROUND

The original Charter for the County of San Bernardino was approved by the voters on November 15, 1912. In 1910, the total population of San Bernardino County was only 56,706. Today the population is over 1,709,500. Offices such as the County Counsel, Registrar of Voters, the County Board of Education and the Purchasing Department weren't created until 1957. The County did not have a Retirement System until 1959.

FINDINGS

Although the original Charter gave the Board of Supervisors the authority to "supervise," it must be considered that the Charter was written 92 years ago and applied to a different time. When the newly created Charter took effect in 1915 the County consisted of the five (5) members of the Board of Supervisors and eight (8) County officers, appointed by the Board of Supervisors. Those officers were:

- Sheriff and ex-officio Coroner
- County Clerk and ex-officio Recorder
- Treasurer and ex-officio Tax Collector and License Collector
- District Attorney and ex-officio Public Administrator
- Auditor
- Assessor
- Superintendent of Schools
- Horticultural Commissioner

The Charter designated the Chairman of the Board of Supervisors as the "Purchasing Agent." It seems apparent at the time that Supervisors were required to play a direct daily supervisory role. Today, the 39 plus departments with over 16,000 employees make "hands on" supervision impractical.

It is also appropriate to consider that allowing the County Administrative Officer (CAO) to implement policy set by the Supervisors and to run and supervise the County departments is the logical and current management style practiced by most successful corporations and governments. Today, the role of the Board of Supervisors in County government should be to set policy and supervise the CAO.

In the course of our investigations and visitations during the past year we have uncovered several instances of Supervisor interference and micro-managing in the day-to-day operations of the County.

There have been five (5) County Administrative Officers in the past three years. Since July 1, 2003 eight (8) department heads and one (1) CAO have been fired, forced out, or resigned.

One Supervisor stated that the Supervisors' role is to "govern and provide oversight of all County departments." Another Supervisor said, "Supervisors are full-time employees and it is their job to set policy, supervise and run the County." Two other Supervisors commented that they believe the Supervisors role is to set policy and allow the CAO to run the County. One Supervisor stated that it is the CAO's responsibility to run the County and not the role of the Supervisors.

It should further be noted that the Forward in the County Charter says, *"Even when laws have been written down, they ought not always to remain unaltered."* –Aristotle

RECOMMENDATIONS

- 04-01 TO AVOID MICRO-MANAGEMENT BY MEMBERS OF THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS, ESTABLISH AND ADOPT A DEFINED POLICY AND PROCEDURE FOR COMMUNICATING WITH THE COUNTY ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER PRIOR TO CONTACT WITH DEPARTMENT HEADS AND OTHER EMPLOYEES.
- 04-02 ESTABLISH AND ADOPT A MORE DEFINED POLICY, INCLUDING CRITERIA, FOR RECRUITING AND HIRING OF THE COUNTY ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER.
- 04-03 ESTABLISH AND ADOPT A POLICY FOR THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS TO ONLY SET POLICY AND WHICH LIMITS THEM TO "SUPERVISING" ONLY THE COUNTY ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER.

INFORMATION SERVICES DEPARTMENT

BACKGROUND

San Bernardino County has had centralized computing since the 1960's. Today there are approximately 560 employees working countywide in information services (IS). Two hundred eighty (280) work in the Information Services Department (ISD) and another 280 work for specific departments. Many ISD staff are located in the departments to which they provide support. Of the 500 plus IS employees, 67 are currently programmers.

FINDINGS

During the Grand Jury's investigation it was discovered that many departments turn over their used desktop computers to the Purchasing Department for disposal, many of which have been "cannibalized." These computers have had hard drives, memory, etc. removed, leaving them unworkable and with no resale value. Purchasing can only sell the computers for \$20 to \$30 per pallet. If the hard drives, memory, etc. had been retained in the units, they could be sold for considerably more. Purchasing has to pay to dispose of computer monitors.

Discussions with ISD found that it has no control over this issue. ISD doesn't "cannibalize" its old desktop computers, but each department has the option to do what it wants with old computers. There is no County-wide policy regulating the disposal of desktop computers.

ISD Network Services currently provides desktop support to only eleven (11) of the 39 County departments/agencies. When these departments replace desktop computers, ISD makes every effort to maximize the life cycle value. It recycles the computers into departments not able to afford new computers, providing the computers will meet their technical and business requirements. After departmental needs are addressed, ISD attempts to place these older computers into lower tiered functions where they will still provide value to the County.

RECOMMENDATIONS

04-04 DEVELOP A STANDARDIZED COUNTYWIDE POLICY FOR REPLACING AND DISPOSING OF DESKTOP COMPUTERS THAT ARE NO LONGER NEEDED BY THE COUNTY.

- 04-05 EXPLORE THE FEASIBILITY OF DONATING DESKTOP COMPUTERS TO SCHOOLS, NON-PROFIT ORGANIZATIONS OR PRISONS FOR EVERYDAY USE OR TRAINING WHEN THE COUNTY NO LONGER NEEDS THEM.
- 04-06 CONDUCT AN AUDIT TO EVALUATE THE COST BENEFITS TO THE COUNTY OF HAVING THE INFORMATION SERVICES DEPARTMENT (ISD) PROVIDE DESKTOP COMPUTER SUPPORT FOR MORE THAN THE ELEVEN (11) COUNTY DEPARTMENTS IT CURRENTLY SUPPORTS. IF THIS AUDIT PROVES FINANCIALLY BENEFICIAL TO THE COUNTY, THEN ESTABLISH A PROGRAM TO HAVE ISD TAKE OVER DESKTOP COMPUTER SUPPORT FOR ALL OR MOST OF THE COUNTY DEPARTMENTS.